

1754
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DISCOVERIES

John Poulter, alias *Ravens*

Who was apprehended for robbing Dr.
HANCOCK, of Salisbury, on Clerken Down, near Bath;
and whose Crimes have been admitted King's Evidence, and
discovered a most numerous Gang of Villains; many of
which have been already taken.

B E I N G

A full Account of all the Robberies he has committed, and
the surprising Tricks and Frauds he has practised for the Space
of five Years last past, in different Parts of England.

Written wholly by H I M S E L F.

To which he has added, as a Caution to prevent any unwary Persons
from being imposed on and defrauded,

An exact Account of the Manner in which GAMBLERS and
other SHARPS impose upon People at Fairs and other Places;
wherein their whole Tricks, Behaviour and Language, is so laid
open, that any one who reads it, may certainly know them at
any Time, and so be upon their Guard against being cheated by
them. With some Precautions to secure Families from being
broke open, very useful for all Families. And likewise some
Cautions to Tradersmen, and others who travel, to prevent their
being robbed. With Directions how to prevent Horses from
being stolen out of Grounds and Commons.

The SEVENTH EDITION, With ADDITIONS.

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The DISCOVERIES of *John Poulter, alias Baxter.*

I Have followed Gambling and Defrauding these five Years last past, and lived on the Spoil of other Men's Substance. About the Middle of *February*, 1749, I and *John Brown*, alias *Dawson*, *Mary Brown**, and *Mary Davis*, met all accidentally at *Litchfield*, on a Fair Day, and after some Ceremony we all agreed to go and drink a Glas of Wine; accordingly we went to Mr. *William Brooks's*, at the *George Inn*, in the said Town, and were shewn up Stairs; we had not been there long, before *Mary Brown* espied a large Chest, and said, here is a Chance, the Lid being loose, and her Hand but small, she pull'd out of the said Chest one yellow Silk flower'd Damask Gown, one green Silk ditto, one brown Silk ditto, and one black flower'd Silk Capuchin, which *Mary Brown* carried out of the said House in her Apron, to the Place where our Horses were: We all made the best of our Way to the B—— D——g, near *Westchester*, where we divided the above Goods among us four. I believe the Goods were worth about sixteen Pounds; the Landlord and Landlady of the B—— D—— very well knew us to be Thieves, and that we lived by nothing else, and also know almost all the Thieves that travel, and harbour them.

But what is very remarkable, at the same Time I sent for a Taylor to take Measure of me for a black Plush Waistcoat, and in his measuring of me a Pistol went off in my Waistcoat Pocket, and the Bullet went under his Arm, and through the Cieling, without doing any Hurt, which very much surprized the Taylor; *Brown* standing by me, I said, what are you always playing your Tricks putting Crackers in my Pocket: But the Taylor was not to be so deceived, for he took home my Plush and Lining with him, and went to *Westchester* to the Mayor, and told him that he thought

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* *Mary Brown* has been tried six Times within four Years and Half: First was at the *Apollo Inn*, *Westmoreland*, with her first Husband *Peter Brown*, and several others, but she was acquitted, and her Husband executed; it was in the latter End of 1748. Next at *Ruthen* in *Denbyshire*, with *John Brown*, for picking Pockets. Next at *Shrewsbury*, by herself, for ditto. Next at *Cambridge*, with *Jane Baily*, on Suspicion of ditto. Next at *Litchfield* in *Staffordshire*, in 1752, for picking *Farmer Booth's* Pocket of sixteen Pounds in the said Town of *Litchfield*, with *Benjamin Shotton* and *Eleanor Cummins*; the two last convicted, and she acquitted: She was tried by the Name of *Mary Robertson*. Next she was tried at *Exon*, at the *Lammas Assizes* 1752, with *Mary Baxter*, for picking a Farmer's Pocket at *Great Torrington*; but she was acquitted, and *Mary Baxter* convicted: She was tried by the Name of *Margaret Dawson*, but now she goeth by her own Name, *Mary Brown*.

we were all Highwaymen. The Mayor ordered him not to let me have any Thing, until he had sent to search the B—— D——g, and bring us before him; but we did not stay for his Coming, for I made the best of my Way for Holy Head, through *Wales*, and directly went for *Dublin*, where I took a House in *Porter's Row* the lower End of *Aston's Kay*; I gave thirteen Pounds a Year, and had good Custom, and drew five Barrels of Ale one Week with another, and lived in good Credit, till a very unhappy Affair happened in *London*, and so it proved to me. General *Sinclair* had his Pocket pick'd of his Gold Watch at *Leicester House*, by *William Harper* and *Thomas Tobin*, and they were both taken and committed to the Gatehouse, *Westminster*; and that Day *Harper* was rescued by a Gang of about twenty-four *Irishmen*, in the Middle of the Day, and they wounded one of the Keepers, but *Tobin* did not escape. A Proclamation was issued out with a great Reward for taking them, when most of them flew to *Ireland*, to my great Grief. One Day, as I was standing at my Door, I was seen by one *James Field*, one of the Gang, who knew me very well; he came in and called for Liquor very plentifully, and the next Day he brought with him the Gang to my House; I desired them not to come to my House, for I would not harbour them, for if I did I should lose all my Custom, for I told them I could live without them in Credit, and without Fear; but they would not be denied, and my House was always full of Thief Catchers and Constables, which caused me to lose my Custom. Not long after, most of the Gang were taken, by one who followed them from *London*, to which Place they were soon transmitted; but it ruin'd me, for I was forced to go away by Night, and left my Cellar full of Ale for my Brewer to take. I went to *Cork* and staid there about three Weeks, but could not take a House to my Liking, so embarked for *Waterford* with all my Household Goods, and staid there about sixteen Weeks. I found I could not live there, for Trade was dead and I but a Stranger. My Brewer sent for me to *Dublin*, which Place I went to again, and in a short Time took a House at the Shades of *Clontarf*, about two Miles from *Dublin*, close to the Seaside, and bought a Smack or Sloop for Fishing, and Hoyslightening Ships, which I followed very hard, and sold Liquors at Home. By these Means I cleared three Pounds a Week, lived in good Credit, and got the Good will of every Body. I hardly ever missed a Tide but was at Sea, and found the Pleasure and Benefit between it got Money, and that got honestly; for the ill-got I always wasted, and my Spirits were never at Rest Night nor Day; but when I lived by my Labour, I eat, drank, and slept at Ease, and was not afraid of any Body.

The latter End of the Year 1751, *Thomas Tobin* and his Wife (two of the most noted Pickpockets in *England*) came to *Dublin*, and found out where I lived, and came to my House ; I begg'd of them never to bring any Person with them, which they promised me they would not, but in a short Time half the Thieves and Thief Catchers in *Ireland* resorted to my House, and laid a Scheme for my Ruin, and so it proved. Gentlemen often came from *Dublin*, and payed me for going into the Channel with them a plovering and fishing, and going aboard of Ships in the Bay; but once among the rest, some of these Chaps came to hire my Smack, to go into the Bay, which I let them have to my Sorrow, for before they came from *Dublin* they told the Custom-house Boat what their Intent was to do, that they might come and seize my Smack. When we were out in the Bay, trying for some Fish, the Custom-house Boat came and boarded me, and said they were sure I had prohibited Goods, for I had Smugglers on board. I bid them search and welcome, which they did to my Sorrow, for they found six Pounds of Tea, and twelve Yards of Callico and Muslin, which was secreted in my Cabin by one of the Villains that came on board to go a pleasuring. The Officers seized the Goods, and my Boat was condemned. I cannot deny but afterwards I met one of the Persons, and beat him very much ; but I had no Rest in *Ireland* afterwards, for I was always troubled with Actions, tho' very false ones, which obliged me to come to *England* again, in *November* 1751.

The latter End of *November*, 1751, I being at *Bath* at *J——R——ts's*, he came to me one Night, and to *Richard Branning*, and told us both in about a Fortnight's Time he could help us to about five or six hundred Pounds if we were both willing. I said, How, *John*? He answered, on the Scamp, and the Cull does not come above seven Straches off ; that is, *on the Highway, and the Man does not come above seven Miles off*. I said, how do you know, *John*? He told me the Gentleman came every setting Day from *Trewbridge* to *Bath*, to change Bills for Money, for he is a Gentleman Clothier, and his Money is to pay his Men; he has never missed a setting Day for Years, and I have threaten'd him several Times before now, but could never get any of the Family to do it; *Little Dick* would have done it last Year, but his Partner, when the Day came, got drunk, and so it passed off ; but now is your Time to make us all, for it is a great deal of Blunt, and worth venturing your Scraggs for ; that is, *it is a great deal of Money, worth venturing your Necks for*. I then told him I had no Pistols ; and he said you must go to *T——r's* at *F——n*, and send him to *Oxford* to buy them, and keep your Horses there until two Days before the Time, The sitting Day is *Tuesday* the tenth of *December*. Accordingly we agreed, and set out for *F——n* to *T——r's*, and I sent him

him to *Oxford*, to buy me a Brace of Pistols and a Hanger, which he bought, and we stayed there till the 8th of *December*, and told T——r what we was going to do, and that he must set up all *Tuesday* Night, and have two Horses ready to carry us sixty Miles further, and we told him we would be there on *Wednesday* Morning by four o'Clock. It was all agreed, and we set out for G——'s at *Ch-p-l Pl-r*, but we did not trust him with our Design. I went to R——'s on the Ninth, to agree what Time we should come on the Tenth, and for him to show us the Way over the Water at *Clarken Down* Mills, which he did. We agreed to give him four-score Pounds out of our Booty. R——'s said that he would be the last Man that would pay his Excise in at the Bar, and then said he, I shall be able to give you an Account what Money the Gentleman receives, and where he puts it, and if you come in to the Inn I will shew him and his Man to you, that you may not be mistaken when they come on the Down. Accordingly I did as he said, and about four o'Clock R——'s met me and told me that the Gentleman had changed his Bills, and had received upwards of five hundred Pounds, and he then shewed me the Gentleman and his Servant. My Horse was left at *Mount Pleasant*, and I did not show myself there; but just as the Gentleman was going he was persuaded not to go that Night, for it was just dark, and a Robbery was committed but on *Saturday* before at *Stocks Bridge*, in his Road home on a Farmer, and he was used very ill after being robb'd by some Footpads, which made the Gentleman stay in *Bath* till the Morning. If he had went home that Night he would have lost all if it had been a thousand Pound, for we had made a Place in the Wood, just before he came to the *Flower-de-luce*, to take him and his Servant into and tie them, but Fortune was not on R——'s Side that Time. We both went to F——'n that Night according to our Promise, and found the Horses ready and our Landlord up, but he was disappointed—— I advise all People that have got a Charge of Money or Bills not to travel after Sun-set.

In *March* 1752, I, *John Brown* alias *Dawson*, *John Allen*, alias *Robert Jones*, alias *Robert Graham*, and *Thomas Tobin*, went a Journey into the North Part of *England*, and coming through *Hallifax*, in *Yorkshire*, we overtook a Minister, and we rode with him till we came to the first Inn, where we defrauded him of twenty-two Pounds at Pricking in the Belt; he said it was as much as his Gown was worth to have it known, and accompanied the Loss of his Money with an Ejaculation. Alas! what have I been at? to which I answer'd, the Sailor has done by you Sir, as you would have done by him, so I wish you good Night. We came that Night to *Stockport*, in *Cheshire*, and lay at an Inn in that Town that Night. The next Morning *Tobin* left our

our Company, and went for *Westchester* on the File*: We stayed on purpose to rob a Pack Horse, accordingly we all went to one *Y——s R——s*'s, an old Acquaintance of my Accomplices, but not of mine. We call'd for Liquor plentifully, and ask'd him when the *Manchester* Carrier came by, He said, To-night, and they travel best Part of the Night; but if you stay till they come by, I will shew you the best Pack, but you have no Sacks; and turning to *Brown* said, you had three the last Pack you got. We said, *Y——s* you must let us have three of yours, and we will pay you for them: Accordingly he gave us three old Sacks, and we promis'd him Half a Guinea for his Trouble; at Night the Horse came by, and he shew'd us all, one particular Pack, and said that's your Mark, and your best Place is beyond the Village, to take him into one of the Fields, and he will not be miss'd for an Hour or two after, so that you may get far enough by the Morning. And accordingly we went after and stole one of the Horses, but not the right, for he was the hindermost next to the Man: The Horse, as soon as the others past began to wicker, so that we were obliged to gag him. We got upwards of one thousand Yards of Callimanco, unscower'd, and rode about thirty Miles that Night before we baited, when we reach'd within four Miles of *Whitchurch* in *Shropshire*, and lay at a *Flash* House. The next Day we arrived at the Rock Tavern, near *S——r B——e* in *Staffordshire*, kept by one *E——* and *M——L——s*, the greatest Place of Rendezvous in *England* for Thieves, and that Night put our Goods into a Grave in their Barn, where they lay three Days, we then fetch'd them up to the House, and cut all the Marks off both Ends of the Pieces. We sold *E——d* and *M——t L——s*, three or four Pieces for three Pence per Yard, we gave them one Piece for their Trouble; and divided the Rest into three Parts. I sent mine to *Bath* to *Y——R——s*'s, where it lay for some Time, till he got me a Dyer to dye it: and the Remainder was left at the Rock Tavern with our Landlord and Landlady, who never paid any Thing for it to this Day. Some Time after, I sold twenty eight Yards of mine to *Mary Brown*, alias *Dawson*, after it was dyed; but when she had made it up, she told me she would not pay me for it, for I had better Luck than her Husband and *Allen* had with theirs; they all well knowing the Callimanco to be stole, and from whence; and, if we or any Body else was to carry the King's Crown to the Rock-Tavern, they would to my Knowledge, secrete it.

Soon after, I and *Thomas Tobin* went to *Grantham*, in *Lincolnshire*, and met with one *Walter Caubone*; and there we defrauded an old Farmer of fifteen Guineas, at the old Nobb, call'd Pricking

* A Cant Word for Cheating. † A House that harbours Thieves.

in the Belt. From thence *Tobin* and I went to *Nottingham*, where we met, with several of our Accomplices ; but Luck running bad that Day, *Tobin*, *Hurst*, and I went on the Sneak, and stole a silver Tankard without a Lid, from the Black-Moor's Head, and paying *Hurst* for his Part, we went for the Rock Tavern again ; but Money being short there, we carried it to *B-grove*, in *Worcestershire*, to *G——e L——ll*, a Shopkeeper there, and *Tobin* sold it to him ; but I cannot say he knew it to be stole, for I was not present, but I have seen *G——e L——ll* buy stolen Goods of several Persons, he well knowing the same to be stolen.

Tobin and I went directly for *York*, and on our Journey into *Yorkshire*, we dined at an Inn, and there stole a large silver Spoon ; but where the House is I cannot recollect. We arrived at *York*, and went to see an old Friend and his pretended Wife, and the next Day went to a Fair, and defrauded a young Gentleman of seven Pounds at the Belt ; and came back the next Day to *York*, being the Day before the Judges came into Town. The next Day *Tobin* and I went on the Sneak to the Black Swan Inn in *Coney Street York*, and stole from thence a Silver Tankard, and a large Sugar Caster and carried them to *Christopher Fet——one*, and his pretended Wife *Sarah Ca——n*, to keep them for us till we went out of Town, and told them from whence they came. The same Day I, *Tobin*, *Fet——one*, and *Sarah Ca——n*, went to the same House on purpose to steal some more Plate, but the People had lock'd the Rest up, to our Disappointment. The next Day *Tobin* and I went for our Plate, which *Sarah Ca——n* brought us ; and we gave her a large Silver Spoon for her Trouble, which we had stole, but where I cannot recollect. Then we went directly to *London*, where I sold the Tankard and Caster to a Silver-Smith near *Smithfield Bars*, in *St. John-Street*, but he did not ask me any Questions how I came by them.

I went just after to *J——n R——ts's* at *Bath*, to meet the rest of my Accomplices at our old House, where I was sure to hear News, and a Welcome into *Bath*. The latter End of *April* there was twelve of us together, all Gamblers and Pickpockets, to our Landlord's Knowledge. We all went into the West for *Sampford Perusal*, and made three Setts ; two Setts got ten Pounds a Piece, from two Farmers that had just sold their Cattle, at the unlawful Game of Pricking in the Belt. The Farmer that I was concerned with, swooned away for the Loss of his Money ; we made a Pretence to fetch some Water to bring him to himself, but went clear off, not regarding whether he lived or died. Two Setts went to *Great Torrington* ; and one Sett, just as they had got into the Fair picked up a Flat, and got twenty Pounds of him, which so alarmed the Town, that the rest came away for *Exon* : So all dispersed

perished but *John Brown* and I, and we defrauded a Man in *Town* of five Pounds.

We then went to *Crewkerne*, where we heard at the *Green Dragon* that our Accomplices were gone forward: The next Day we rode out of *Town*, but promised to come back the same Night, which we did: But just before we came into *Town*, we heard that two Sharpers was taken up at *S——l C——l's*, and that their Horses were there: So we called, and the Horses were delivered to us, to take them away for Fear they should be stopt; for they were both stole, one by *William C——s*, and the other by *William S——w*, both then in Custody at *Crewkerne*, for defrauding a Man at *Chard* of five Pounds; and one of them stole a Great Coat at *Chard*, and they were both cast for Transportation at *Bridgewater* for the same.

Brown and I took the two Horses to *Bath*, to *John R——s*, and told him what had happened, and that he must sell the Gelding, and Mare: We told him where they were stole from, and he said it was far enough off, and asked us what we would have for the Gelding; we told him four Pounds,; he said that if we would take a Thirty-six Shilling Piece, he would run all Hazards; so we agreed for him: And he told us if any Body asked what he cost, we must say four Pounds, for he would sell him to a Farmer that he bought his Straw of, that never went five Miles from home.

I left *Brown* at *R——s's* with the grey Mare, whilst I, *William Elger*, and *John Allen*, alias *Robert Jones*, alias *Robert Graham*, went to the *Rock Tavern*, to see his Wife and Child, that was at Nurse there: from thence we went into the North of *England*, to Fairs, Horse Races, and Cock Matches, on the *Sharping Lay*, and won between thirty and forty Pounds at Cards, alias *Broads*. From thence we went to *Newcastle upon Tyne*, where we got about three Pounds from a Butcher Man at the *Belt*, or *Nobb*. From thence we went into the South again; and we picked up in our Way Money enough to bear our Expences to *Bath* for the Benefit of the Waters, to the great Joy of our Landlord. We stayed off and on at *Bath* about six Weeks, and passed for Smugglers: We used to give seven Shillings a Pound for Tea, and sell it again for four Shillings and Six-pence, on purpose to make People believe we were Smugglers. We went to a Fair now and then in that Time, and if we could not get any Money at the *Nobb*, we would buy a Horse or two, and give our Notes for the Money, telling the Dealer we lived at a Town where we did not. This is called *Masoning*.

July the 23, 1752, I and *William Elger*, *John Brown*, alias *Darwin*, *John Allen*, alias *Robert Jones*, alias *Robert Graham*, and *Thomas Walker*, went to *Blandford Races*, where we met *Charles Hardy*: We went to the Cocking in the Morning, and to the

Races in the Afternoon; some went on the Turn to the Booths, and others to laying Wagers on the Courle: A flatfish Gentleman laying seven Pounds with one of us, they both asking who should hold Stakes, one of us sitting on Horseback just by on Purpose, says, put it in that Man's Hand, pointing to one of us that was well dressed; the Money being so delivered, the Man winning, he that held the Stakes rides off the Course. After the Races we all meet at *Blandford*. and agreed to go on the Sneak for any Thing we could get. In the Dusk of the Evening, we went to the Crown Inn, and stole, out of the fore Parlour, a large Portmanteau Trunk, and carried it into the Fields to skin it, that is, to search it, when we found in it the following Things, viz. Eighteen Guineas, a Jacobus, and several other Pieces of Gold and Silver Coin, a Gold Repeating Watch, with all the Trinkets thereunto belonging, a Pair of Gold Shoe Buckles, a Gold Coral and Bells, a Gold Girdle Buckle, and Necklaces set in with green Stones, a great Quantity of Jewels, a fly white Petticoat, a great Quantity of young Girls wearing Apparel, and one pair of Sheets. *Thomas Walker* and I carried the Gold Watch and Jewels to *London*, and *Walker* sold them to a Person unknown to me, because I was not with him; but he said, he told the Man he sold them to, that he got them at Sea, in a Prize. He brought me Twenty-seven Pounds for the Watch and Jewels. We then came back to *Popham Lane*, to the Sign of the Wheat-sheaf, where our Accomplices were waiting for us; we there divided the Money equally between us, and came to *Bath*, where I sold the Pair of Sheets to *J—n R——ts* for two Shillings, and the fly Petticoat worked with a Needle for a Guinea, tho' it was worth four: he secreted the rest for me in a Closet. Just after I sold a red Silk quilted Petticoat to *M—y G—a*, for her Daughter, for Half a Guinea: At the same Time she begged a laced Cap, with Wire about the Border; and I told her she must not let her Daughter wear it, for it was stole from a Portmanteau at *Blandford* and that it was advertised at the same Time in *Bath*: She said I need not fear, for it should be altered, she well knowing the same to be stolen and from whence.

I sold the Bells, Seal, Shoe Buckles, and Girdle Buckles, all of Gold, to *J—n F—d*, a Silversmith in *Bath*; and he melted them down before my Face, into an Ingot of Gold, not quite an Ounce. I told him from whence they came, and he said he did not care if they came from the Ruffen, (that is the Devil) I wish we had as much as you and I could put out of Twig, or break in sunder.

We went out of *Bath*, to *Corsham Fair*, about eleven Miles from *Bath*; that is, *I, William Elger, John Brown, alias Dawson, John Allen, alias Robert Jones, alias Robert Graham*, and we stole a silver Tankard from an Inn in *Corsham*: I brought it directly to *J—n*

F——*at Bath*, who not being at Home, I told his Wife we had stole a Silver Tankard from *Corsham*, and wanted to melt it down; I then went up Stairs with her, and she fasten'd a Pair of Sheers in to a Vice, and began to cut it in Pieces; when her Husband came in, and told us, he had heard of the Tankard, and where it came from, but he would soon put it out of Twig; and said, *Betty* go and make a Fire in the Shop, and bring a large Crucible; which she did, and they melted it down before my Face; and she said, *Mr. Poulter*, at any Time, if you have Gold or Silver, I will melt it down for you if my Husband is not at Home; but you must not take any Notice to my Brother of what passes between my Husband and you: At the same Time she ask'd me for a Shilling for her Trouble, which I gave her. They both knew the same to be stolen, and from whence.

Brown, Elger, and Allen, bought a Horse at the Turnpike near *Corsham*, of a Farmer, for six Pounds, but gave their Note for it; and *St——n G——a* said he knew *Brown* very well to be the same Person he represented himself to be, though he knew at the same Time they were defrauding the poor Farmer.

October the 26th, 1752, I, with *John Brown*, alias *Dawson*, *William Elger*, *John Allen*, alias *Robert Jones*, alias *Robert Graham*, went from *Bath* in order to rob a Pack-Horse: We made the best of our Way to *W——m T——'s*, at *Farrington*, in *Berkshire*, and after Supper we called plentifully for White Wine Negus; then we ask'd *W——m T——r* when *Charley*, the *Coventry* Carrier, came to *Morton* in the Marsh: He answered, on *Monday* or *Tuesday*; and now is your Time, for he takes up all the Ribbons that are left at *Stow* Fair, and carries them to *Bristol* this Journey. To which we replied, How shall we know the right Pack? *W——m T——r* said, you must observe the Pack that has Boxes in it, that is the right, and is either full of Ribbons, or Things of Value; and, if you succeed, bring them to me, and I will buy them all of you: We then told him we had no Sacks, and he ordered his Ostler to go and buy three new Sacks, for which I paid six Shillings before his Face. The next Morning he wish'd us good Luck, and we set out for *Morton* in the Marsh, where we got that Night, and put up at *W——m N——'s*. He was glad to see my Accomplices, but did not know me; after Supper we ask'd him when *Charley* came to *Morton* in the Marsh: He answered, I cannot tell, but I will go to his Brother and enquire. When he came back, he told us To-morrow Morning; but it will be late before he gets to *Park* corner, because he takes up Ribbons at *Stow*, that were left at the Fair. We did not stir out all the Time we were there; for, he said, if we were seen, it would be known who did it, for he well knew our Intent was to take one of *Charley's* Packs; and

he assured us, that at any Time he would go and swear for us, (as he did for *Robert Jones* and others at *Warwick*;) if Occasion required. We set out the next Day for *Park-corner*, which Place we reached just as *Charley* came there; *Brown* then rode before us to detain *Charley* at a Publick-House, under Pretence of carrying a Letter for him, which he wrote and gave him: In the mean Time we went forward, and try'd the Packs as *T——r* had directed us; and I catch'd the Horse by the Neck, but he was so shy and startish, that he throw'd me and *Allen* into a Ditch, and got away from us, so that we could not catch him any more. We then took the next, and led him down into a Park about a Mile from the Place, where we could not get out: But it was remarkable, *William Elger* rode a Gelding that he gave eighteen Guineas for, and in conveying along the Pack Horse, rode into a great Hole, and his Gelding and he tumbled over, when the Pack Horse ran back almost to *Park-corner* before we could catch him. We tied the Horse to a Bush, and gag'd him, whilst we put the Goods up in our Sacks, and left them in that Place till we rode almost to *Park-corner* before we could get out, and there we saw *Brown* and *Charley* going together. *Charley* asked us whether we had seen his Horses, and how many there were: We said six, but they were a Mile before him, and then bid him a good Night. We rode round the Park Wall, just against the Place where we left our Goods, and the Horse whicker'd: I was forced to stand on the Horse's Back to get over the Wall, to throw over the Goods. We then loaded our Horses, and made the best of our Way to *Chapel Plaster*, at which Place we arrived about Five o'Clock in the Morning, and calling up *S——n G——*, we stayed there that Day. I ask'd *S——n G——a* to get me a Horse, and something to carry my Goods in; which he did, for he lent us his own Horse that he bought of us some Time before at *Weyhill Fair*, and a Pair of Butcher's Pots, in which we packed up all our Goods except one Piece of Camblet, and twelve Pair of Scarlet Stockings, which *Brown*, *Allen*, and I, kept for our Women. We divided the Piece (I think it was thirty-nine Yards) into three Parts, and the Stockings into the same. I gave my Part to *M——y G——a*, to keep for me, and so did they, till I came again. The next Morning we set out for *Farrington*, where we arrived late at Night, it being fifty Miles from *Chapel Plaster*. We sent *Allen* before to bespeak Supper for us, and to open the back Gate, and to put the Ostler out of the Way until we had unloaded our Goods; which was done. After Supper we drank plentifully of Punch and White Wine Negus; and the next Morning we sold *W——m T——r* all the Caps and Stockings: He got us a Box, to pack up the Pieces of Stuff in, and we put it into his Warehouse, with Directions to be he left at

W——m T——r's, at *Farrington*, in *Berkshire*, till called for. The next Morning we set out for a Fair at *Newbury* in *Berkshire*, where we defrauded a young Man of his Watch, Horse, and four Guineas in Money, at the *Old Nobb*, or pricking in the Belt. We then went back to *T——r's*; and when we came there, he shew'd us a Letter he had received from *Mr. Grovenor*, of *Bristol*, for *T——r* to make all the Enquiry he could after such Goods, among all the Shopkeepers about that Country, for he had lost a Pack: At the same Time *T——r* had bought all the Caps and Stockings of us, and had all the Pieces of Stuff in his Warehouse, and that to his Knowledge. His Wife *H——h* came to me, and desired me to ask her Husband to buy all the Stuff, for he could dispose of it all; but he refused, because it was advertised. *H——h* *T——r* said she would buy one Piece of Stuff for her own Use, unknown to her Husband: Then she and I went up Stairs, and she pick'd out a very large Piece of brown strong Stuff from all the rest, and gave me eighteen Shillings for the same, they both knowing the same to be stolen, and from whence. If there was not such People as these to encourage Thieves, and receive their Goods, there would be no Thieves. We set out the next Morning for *Salisbury*, with the Goods that were left, thinking to sell them to *C——H——*; but he was not at Home: So I carried them to *Stockbridge*, to another Fence of our's, that is, a Receiver of stolen Goods, one *R——t L——*, a Publican, that always bought the Watches of us we got at pricking in the Belt, or any other Defraud: I sold him six Pieces and a half, which he pick'd out from all the rest, and he gave me eighteen Shillings a Piece for them, but he would have the half Piece into the Bargain. He ask'd me where the said Stuff was stole from; and I told him: He said he would sell some to one, and some to another, in the Country; but we cut off all the Marks of both Ends of the Pieces, for Fear of a Discovery. He also lent me a Box to pack up five Pieces and a half that was left, to send up to *London* to *William Elger*, who was gone to Town to see his Friends, directed thus, For *Mr. William Elger*, to be left at the *Swan*, on *Holbourn-Bridge*, *London*, till called for; which the said *L——* did send away, he well knowing the same to be stolen, and from whence; he knowing us all to be Sharpers and Thieves, and that we had no other Way of Living but by defrauding and robbing. We went back to *G——a's*, and I sold the Piece of Stuff and four Pair of Scarlet Stockings to *M——y G——a*: *Mary Brown*, alias *Dawson*, had another Piece, and four Pair of Stockings: I bought the four Pair of Stockings of *Mary Brown* again. *Frances Allen* had the other Part.

The Beginning of *November*, to the best of my Remembrance, I and *William Elger*, *John Brown* and *John Allen*, came from *Wil-*

ton towards *Bath*, on Purpose to break open a House in *Wade's Passage*, which we looked at several Times before. We stole in our Way from *Wilton*, a large Iron Crow from a Sheepfold on *Salisbury Plain*, on Purpose to wrench open the Door of the said Shop: We left our Horses at *Mount Pleasant*, while we went a milling that Swagg, that is, a breaking open that Shop. We wrenched open the Pad Lock, but could not open the Door, altho we made a great Purchase with the Iron Crow; we made several Attempts, and in the mean Time the Scout came by, that is, the Watch; but *Brown* took him off, while we were at Work, which is easily done for a Quart of Drink: *Brown* knew the Watchman, but I can't say the Watchman knew him. If all the Doors of Shops and Houses shut as close as that did, it would prevent a great many Robberies in Cities and Towns; for no Doors ought to have any Play, if they have they are easily broke open. We tried two Shops in the Church yard, at their Windows, the one a Toy Shop, and the other a Watchmaker's, but were disappointed by a drunken Man's coming into the Church-yard, and sitting himself down. We had got a Spring Saw to cut the Bolts afunder, that *F* made for *Brown*; the Iron Crow I threw over the Bridge on the Left Hand Side. *

The latter End of *November*, all of us being at *Bath*, we agreed to go to *Bristol*, to get something towards our Expences; where *John Allen* pick'd up a Countryman near the Mount, that is, the Bridge, and brought him into the *H—R—st*, near the Back, which House we had made Flash before-hand; the Countryman had but little Money, which the Sailor knew, and therefore laid him Half Guinea that he could not borrow ten Pounds in half an Hour; then *Allen* and he went into the *Fish Market*, and he borrowed the Money of a Shopkeeper, and brought it to the said *H—R—st* to us, and received the Wager; but we defrauded him of all the Money in about ten Minutes, at the *Old Nobb*, or Belt. A Countryman came just afterwards to the House to enquire for us, but the Landlady hush'd the Man, and said she knew nothing of him nor us. The Countryman went Home, and told in his Neighbourhood that he was robbed by three Fellows on the Road. I have seen him several Times since at *Bath Market*, and have spoke to him, and he told me the same; I contradicted him, and said, I believed he lost it at Gaming: He did not see my Face at *Bristol* when he lost his Money, so he did not know me at *Bath*. The Man keeps *Bath Market*, and stands at the upper End of the Market-House, selling Hog's Haslets, and wears his own Hair.

Just after, about the 28th Day of *November*, we were all at *Bath*, when *Brown* took the Opportunity at Night to go on the Sneak by himself, to one Mr. *Bartlet's*, on the *North Parade*; he went into a Parlour,

* This was found lately in the River.

Parlour, where he saw a Candle lighted, and stole from thence a Portmanteau Trunk: The Key was in it, and a Bundle on it, he took off the Bundle, and unlocked the Trunk, and seeing it was full of rich Cloaths, he locked it again, but took out the Key; and in the mean Time a Servant came and looked into the Room, and *Brown* hid himself behind the Door, and when the Servant was gone, he took up the Trunk and went into *King's Mead* Fields, and left it there while he came and told us what he had done: I was in Bed, and so was *Allen*, but *Elger* and he went and skin'd the Trunk, and put the Things into a Sack, and *Elger* sent his Horse to *S—n G—'s* that Morning. The Horse was taken out of *R—ts*'s Stable unknown to him or his Ostler until Morning, when *R—ts* knew it, but the Ostler did not. In the Morning *Elger* and *Mary Brown* went on Foot to *Chapel Plaster*, to look over the Things, and I and *Allen* went that Night to them: The next Morning we all set out for the *Devizes*, to one *J—n A—'s*; *Elger* and *Allen* did not lie at the said House, but *Brown* and I did. I went and bought a Deal Box, into which we put our Things, and nailed it up, and left it under a Bed in a Room, and told *J—n A—*, the Landlord, to take Care of it. He said, if it was Diamonds you know it is safe in my House. Some Time after we saw our Landlord, and *Brown* ask'd him if the Things were safe; he said yes, I have one of the Advertisements at my House, but do not mind that, for nobody will suspect my House; he well knowing we lived by nothing but Robbing and Defrauding the Country.

We went from thence to *Salisbury*, to see a Crop Horse run over that Course, belonging to *Thomas Brooks* of *Colebarbour*, he was seventeen Years of Age, and ran nineteen Miles within an Hour: We could take nobody in at *Salisbury* at any Trick, so we went that Night to *Wilton*, to consult what to do. *Brooks* lay with us that Night, and the next Day we agreed to go and steal some Horses, and take them into the North, and bring others back into the South; we went that Evening, about all the Grounds within three Miles of *Salisbury*, and could see none worth taking, but a Colt worth about fourteen Pounds, and him we could not catch. We went towards *Salisbury*, and just by a Mill in the Marshes, we caught two Galloways, both with cut Manes, but we thought them not worth taking; we therefore went that Night to *Salisbury*, and the next Day to *Farringdon*, in *Berks*, we made it Night before we got to *Marlborough*, where we stole a black Mare out of a Ground just by, in the Road to *Farringdon*, which we reached that Night; we lay at *W—m T—r's* that Night and the next Day, and at Night we went into a Field of *Mr. Lock's*, at the *Crown Inn*, and stole from thence a Bay Gelding, and I rode all that

that Night with the Mare and Gelding towards *Highamferris*; for there was a Fair there the next Day; but *Brown*, *Elger*, and *Allen* staid there that Night to prevent our being discovered: They met me at *Highamferris*, but we could not sell our Horses. ~~T~~ our Landlord, knew the black Mare, and of our stealing the Gelding. We made the best of our Way into *Yorkshire*, and we sold the Gelding to a Baker in *Doncaster*, for four Pounds, but he did not know it was stolen. We then went for *Wakefield* Fair, but when we came there were disappointed, for there was none. *Elger's* Horse fell sick at *Newark on Trent*, and he borrowed a Horse of the Baker that bought the Bay Gelding; but when we were at *Wakefield*, *Allen* borrowed a Horse to go to *York*, and *Elger* sent his Horse back to *Doncaster*, for we saw, in the *London Evening Post*, the Bay Gelding advertised, and made the best of our Way to *Bantry*, but did not come near *Doncaster*. We sold the black Mare there to a Man of *Rotherham*, for one Pound one Shilling and Sixpence; she broke out with the Grease. We went the next Day to a Fair in *Lincolnshire*, and picked up a Man on the Dropping of a Shilling, and brought him into the House, where *Elger* and *Brown* were set on Purpose. *Elger* passed for a Sailor, and *Brown* for a Dealer; the Man had no Money, but *Elger* laid him a Guinea he could not borrow twenty Guineas in half an Hour; I went the Countryman's Halves, and went with him, and at the first Place he borrowed Ten, and a thirty Pound Bank Note, and in returning he borrowed twelve more; we went back to the Sailor, and show'd him the Money, on which he paid him the Guinea, and we went to play at Pricking in the Belt, we made Stakes for twenty-two Guineas, and fain would have played for fifty, which the Countryman would not, but said, if he won he would play again; but the Sailor took Care not to let him, he pricked and lost, and was most terribly frightened, but he would prick again for thirty; we were afraid he would make too big a Row when he lost that, that is, a great Noise, however we made Stakes for the sixty, which was the Note and our thirty; he pricked and lost, and then stood as if he was Thunder-struck, for some Time with his Back against the Door: I seemed to be the same; but at last got him out of the Room, under Pretence of borrowing some Money, while the Sailor and *Brown* went to our Horses, which *Allen* had got ready, I gave the Countryman the Slip, and followed after them, not letting any Grass grow under our Feet for thirty Miles before we stopt, and that was at *Bantry*, at a House of our own Sort. There was a great Search made all the Country round for us, but we were at Home. The next Day we made our Way for the City of *Cambridge*, in order to mill some Ken, that is, to break open some House; but we had no Success there, so we agreed to prig some Peads, that is,

steal

steal some Horset, and take them away West: *Allen* and I went for *Newmarket*, and *Brown* and *Elger* for *Leighton Buzzard*. I and *Allen* stole a black Gelding and a Bay Colt, near *Brinkley* in the *Woodlands*, and brought them to *Hungerford* in *Berks*, and sold them to *William B——ge*, of the same Place: He did not know that they were stolen, but thought that they were got on the Mason, that is, for Paper. *Brown* and *Elger* stole a flat headed Bay Gelding from the Bell Inn in *Leighton Buzzard*, and brought him to *Bath*, and kept him for his own riding. We sold the sorrel Mare that was stole from *Wakefield*, to our Landlord *J——n R——ts*, at *Bath*; he would not buy her till he knew where she was stolen from, but he had no Luck with her, for she fell sick and died in a Fortnight after. Here we divided all the Money we got this Journey.

About the latter End of *December*, being all at *Bath* together, *J——n R——ts*, our Landlord, came to *Brown*, *Elger*, and *Allen*, and ask'd for me; he told them he could help them to twenty Pounds; just after I came to his House, when he told me the same: I ask'd him how it was to be got; and he replied, on the Scamp, that is, on the Highway; for, says he, there is a Man that puts up at my House, that is going to receive twenty Pounds, but a great deal of it will be in Halfpence, and it is easy to be napt, that is, taken. We then agreed that I should go and rob the Man by myself, and they would be at a small Distance for Fear of Resistance. *R——ts* helped the Man to tie the Sack behind him, that the Money was in, I standing by him at the same Time; the Man went his Way, and we followed him up to the Top of the Hill, I got on a Collier's Horse, with Coal Sacks on the Pack Saddle, I spoke to the Man going up the Hill, and when I got on the Down I let him go on before, and then rode after, overtook, and robbed him; I had a Stick in my Hand, which *R——ts* and my Accomplices gave me, and a Tinder Box instead of a Pistol: I rode the Man's Horse back again to the Foot of the Down, where my Accomplices were waiting for me, and we went directly to *John R——ts's*. The Money that I robbed the Man of, was one Guinea and some Silver, and thirty-nine Shillings in Halfpence, which we divided between us, and *R——ts* had eight Shillings worth of the Halfpence. The Man came to *R——ts's* the next Morning, and said that he was robb'd, and ask'd what Time his Ostler came home, for he suspected him: We told him he was at a Friend's House all Night; and we all laugh'd to hear the Man say the Person who robbed him put a Pistol to his Cheek, it being nothing but a Tinder Box.

About the 18th of *January*, 1753, I, *Brown*, *Elger*, and *Allen*, agreed to go to *Bristol* on the Sharp, or the Sneak; which we did;

but we could not get any Thing on the Sharp that Day: But at Night we went on the Sneak, first into *Queen Square*, and tried several Houses. At last *Elger* jump'd the Glass of a Gentleman's Keen; that is, list'd up the Window of a House at the lower End of the Square, and jump'd into the Parlour, and brought out five Silver Tea Spoons and one Pair of Tea Tongs, with a Delft Server from a Tea Table. We then pull'd down the Window, and went our Way: I think the Tea Spoons were marked with the Spread Eagle. We went directly over the Draw Bridge for *College Green*, and tried all the Doors and Windows there: At last we went into *Orchard-Street*, to one Mr. *Smith's*, a Watch-maker, as I was since informed. *Brown* got Entrance in at the Door, and went up Stairs into the Bed Chamber, whilst the Family was below, and he staid about twenty Minutes in the House; and in the mean while Mrs. *Smith* came to the Door, and *Elger* ask'd her where such a Gentleman lived; she told him, and went in and shut the Door after her. We all resolv'd, if *Brown* was grabb'd, that is, taken, to rescue him; but he soon came out with his Arms full of Men's wearing Apparel, such as follows, viz. Three Coats, two Waistcoats, three Pair of Breeches, a great Quantity of Stockings and Neckcloths, and one Handkerchief. The said Things I carried to *Frances Allen's* Room that Night, for her to secrete for us, and accordingly she did; and I went next Day to *Bristol* again, to meet my Accomplices: I left with Mrs. *Allen* a Pair of Silver Shoe Buckles of Mr. *Smith's*. We went at Night on our old Rigg; and went over the Draw-bridge towards *College Green*; *Brown* went into a Peruke-maker's House, and went up Stairs, and had got all the Things in a Table Cloth that was in the Drawers, when he heard a Noise of the Barber and another Man coming home; who suspecting us, (as having heard of Mr. *Smith's* House being broke open the Night before) followed us, and shut his Door: However, *Brown* got out of a Garret Window, and over the Tops of several Houses, and got behind a Stack of Chimnies for the Space of two Hours: He could not get into any House, but was forced to go back again into the same House, and come softly down Stairs along the Entry: A Boy hearing some Body in the Entry, ran to him with a Knife in his Hand, and call'd him Rogue; upon which, *Brown* told the Mistress of the House, that as he was coming over the Draw Bridge, a Bailiff was in Pursuit of him, and that he ran into her House for Shelter, and had been on the Stairs a Quarter of an Hour, which the weak Woman believing, bid him stay for Fear the Bailiffs should be about the Door; but he did not care to stay for Fear the Master should come home, and so bad her good Night and went his Way, but we were at *Bath* five Hours before him.

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The next Day we divided the Stockings and Neck-Cloths between us four, except some Thread Stockings and the Handkerchiefs, which *Mary Brown* and *Frances Allen* would have for themselves: The two Women kept the rest of the Things for us till *Bristol Fair*. Our Landlord *R——* had one of the Bills of the Robbery left at his House; and when we came into his House, he said, *Why will you not let me have some of the Cloaths, to make my Son some Cloaths? You never let me have any Thing as you do other Landlords: I think I ought to have a Penny's worth as well as they.*

The 25th of *January, 1753*, we went to *Bristol Fair* on the Sharp; but we had no Luck that Day, so at Night we went to milling of Swaggs, that is, breaking of Shops, or Ware-houses: Accordingly we went to the *Bell-Inn*, in *Thomas-street*, and broke open the Ware-house, and with a dark Lanthorn they brought out of the said Ware-house to me, two Pieces of broad Livery Cloth, one brown and the other blue, directed for *Mr. Harford of Bath*: I staid in the Street till the other three went into a House in *Temple-street*, just by the Back of the said Inn; where *Elger* went up Stairs, and opened a Box that was not locked, and brought out a Piece of brown Stuff, and Linen for a Gown, and gave it to me; I came to the *Lamb-Inn* at *Lawford's-Gate* with it, and took Horse directly for *Bath*, and delivered the Goods to *Frances Allen* to secrete for me, and I then went to Bed: About Two o'Clock in the Morning, *Brown*, *Allen*, and *Elger* came to *Bath* with a Pack of Handkerchiefs that they had stole from the *London Warehouse* in *Peter-street*; and they told me they had lost a good Booty for Want of the Lanthorn that I had in my Pocket. *Elger* went forward with the Pack of Handkerchiefs to *Chapel Plaster*; and *Brown* and *Allen* call'd for the Cloth, Stuff, and Cloaths, that *Mary Brown* and *Frances Allen* had secreted for me; and they followed *Elger* to *St——n G——*'s, where *G——* got a Box made on Purpose to nail up the said Goods in. I went the next Morning to them, and put the Things into the Box: We staid there a Day or two, and at last we sold *S——n G——* upwards of twenty Dozen of the said Handkerchiefs, and four Yards of the blue Cloth, and to his Wife *Mary* the Piece of Stuff for a Gown, they both well knowing the same to be stolen, and from whence.

The next Day we all set out for the *Rock Tavern* in *Staffordshire*, with our Goods; but it raining, we left *Brown* on the Road with them, and went forward to the said Tavern, it being our old Place of Rendezvous; where we sold a Silk Camblet Coat, two Pair of Breeches, and a Silk Cream-coloured Waistcoat, for one Pound six Shillings, to *Edward* and *Margaret L——*, and they help'd me to cut off the Gold Lace from an embroidered blue Pad-dusway Waistcoat, and we burnt it before their Faces, and gave them

the Remainder of the Waistcoat, and told them from whence it was stolen : We sold the Remainder of the Handkerchiefs, about nineteen Dozen, to *John* ———, and the Mazarene blue Coat for one Pound, he being at *Bristol* the same Time they were stolen, and saw them at *G*——'s House ; but he would have nothing to do with them there, until we carried them to the *Rock Tavern*.

Brown came to us the next Day, and told us he had sold the Cloth for 4 s. 6 d. per Yard, to *Mr. Thomas B*——, at *Coal-harbour*, in *Gl*——*r* Road ; but I cannot take upon me to swear i, because I was not a Witness of it.

The *R---k Tavern* has been a Place of Rendezvous for these People for thirty Years past, tho' never detected till now ; but all the Country knew it, and used to call those who used it, *Thieves* and *Highwaymen*. The Landlord and Landlady have appeared at their Trials several Times ; but once especially for *Christopher F*——*stone* at *Northampton*, for a Robbery on the Highway, and got him off by swearing him to be at their House at the Time.

When we came to *Bath*, I sold the Silver we took off the embroidered Waistcoat to *John F*——*d*, which was not quite an Ounce. I told him it was taken off a Waistcoat which was stole from *Mr. Smith* of *Bristol* ; but I never got above one Shilling of *F*——*d* for my Silver to this Day. *Brown* likewise sold the Silver Spoons and Tea Tongs that were stolen from a House in *Queen's Square*, to *John F*——*d*, for nine Shillings, he well knowing the said Things to be stolen, and from whence.

We all staid in *Bath* to spend our ill-got Money until *March*. *R*——*ts* had got one *Burk* at his House, very poor, and just out of *Bristol* Goal, whom he kept for a Month at Bed and Board. On the 11th Day of *March*, *Brown*, *Elger*, and *Allen*, went to *Abingdon* Fair, and left *Burk* and I at *R*——*ts*'s, when the latter came to me, and said, *John, Will you take Burk with you, for he owes me Money?* To which I answered, *Not I; I am not going out at all any more* : He said, *Abingdon Fair is To-morrow, and Burk will show you where you may bus a Couple of Prads, and fence them at Abingdon Gaff; that is, Burk will show you a Couple of Horses that you may steal, and sell them at Abingdon Fair* : Accordingly we did steal two Geldings from a Ground of *Mr. Smith's* at the *Castle and Ball*, one a black and the other a Bay, and rode all Night, and the next Morning we got to *Abingdon*, where I saw my Accomplices, who had no Luck that Day. I sold the black Gelding to a Countryman near *Squire Dashwood's* in *Oxfordshire*, and we stood in the Fair all the Day with the other ; but we could not get our Price for him : At last we sold him to a Flash Dealer, one *Rishop*, of my Acquaintance, for three Pounds thirteen Shillings and Six-pence, and told him where he came from, he at the same Time

very

very well knowing him to be worth seven Pounds ; and then we had no Horse between us both, but I chanced to go into the *Ram* or *Lamb Inn*, when the Ostler asked me if I wanted my Horse, I said *Yes* ; when he brought me a fine Bay Gelding, bridled and saddled : I ask'd him what he came to, he said *Five-pence* ; but I gave him *Six-pence*, and rode away, sometimes riding and sometimes walking. We lay that Night at *Lacklade*, and the next Night at *Cheltenham* in *Gloucestershire*. About a Mile from that Town, *Burk* stole a Grey Poney, and we rode that Night to the *Rock Tavern*, our old Place of Rendezvous.

The next Day we went within three Miles of *Newport* in *Shropshire*, to another Flash House ; and the Day after we went to *Nantwich* Fair in *Cheshire*, where we met with two Flash Horse Jockeys, to whom I sold the Bay Gelding : Their Names were *John S——* and *Joseph S——*, both Partners, and who live at *N——p——t* : They both ask'd me where the Horse came from, and I told them that I stole him from the *Ram* or *Lamb Inn*, in *Abingdon* : They said they would take Care what Part he went to, and then gave me six Guineas for him, tho' it was worth fourteen.

We did not sell the Poney at *Nantwich*, but that Night we stole* a black Gelding, Saddle and Bridle, from a Publick House Door ; and we rode back to our Flash House, three Miles from *Newport*, the Sign of the *W—— H——*, on the *London Road*.

The next Day we went towards our old House, the *Rock Tavern* ; but *Burk* sold the Poney to a Stranger on the Road : Then I carried him behind me to the *Rock Tavern*, where we staid that Night, there being five more there of our Way of Calling. We went next Morning towards *Birmingham*, and got there just before Night ; where we bought two Brace of Pistols, and went that Night and stole a Bay Gelding from a Ground about a Mile and half from thence : and we rode that Night to *Worcester*, and knocked up a Flash Landlord at the *B—— Inn*, near the Bridge Foot, whose Name is *D——* : The next Night to the *Cross*, to another Flash House, and the next Night to *Bath*, and the next Morning to *St——n G——'s* at *Chapel Plaister*, where I sold the black Gelding we stole at *Nantwich*, to a Dealer in Needles, whose Name is *Darby*, and who came from *Bromsgrove* in *Worcestershire* for three Guineas, and *St—— G——* vouched for the same.

That Night I and *Burk* went over *Clarken Down*, towards *Trowbridge* in *Wiltshire*, but not on any Design of robbing ; and going
down

* The only Method that I know, to prevent Horses being stole, is to send to *Birmingham* for some of their Case-hardened Locks, which are made on Purpose ; no Thief or other Person can get the said Lock off the Horse's Fetlock without the Key. They must be lined with Leather to prevent their galling the Heel of the Horse, and not have any Chain to it, for that will fret the Horse if he has any Spirit. If any Thief steals him over Night, in the Morning when they see the Lock on him they will turn him up, for the said Lock cannot be filed off, nor broke ; and the Expences of it will be but two Shillings each Lock. It must not be put on too tight, neither be too big.

down the Hill at the watering Place, we met a Post Chaise, which *Burk* swore he would go and rob : I denied to go with him, but he still swore he would : I asked him, as we followed the Chaise, if he thought I was mad, to do such a Thing so near *Bath*, and just as I came out of a House I was so well known in ; but he again swore he would do it himself, if I would not go with him : Then I thought with myself that if he was taken, I should be in as much Danger as he, for being with him just before ; so I consented to go with him. I desired him not to be guilty of any Mischief, or hurt any Person, for that four Men were as easily robbed as one, and that the Sight of a Pistol unawares, is a great Terror to any Man, and without they fire at me, don't fire at them ; he told me he would not : Then I rode up to the Chaise, and bid the Boy stand, but I believe he did not hear me, for he kept on. The World may think it is false, but I assure them it is true, as I am not sure whether I am for Life or Death : It being dark before I got up with the Chaise, I did not know whether the Window was up or down, but I ran my Hand through the Glass, and cut my Fingers all across, and I believe in drawing my Hand out of the Window, pulled down the Cock of my Pistol, for it went off through both Windows unexpectedly ; but I thought at first the Fire came from the Chaise, till I put my Hand on the Cock and felt it down ; and *Burk* (he being behind the Chaise) also thought the Fire came from the Chaise at me, as he told me afterwards, which was the Occasion of his firing : Then we had no Pistol loaded, for we had but a Brace loaded when we attacked the Chaise, having discharged a Brace just before at a Mark on the Down. The World hath said that I threatened the Child's Life, but I declare I had not such a Thought ; for Mr. *Hancock* gave her to me, desiring me not to hurt her, and I took her in my Arms and kissed her, and then set her down : I do not deny but there was very bad opprobrious Language passed at first ; but at last, if any Body had come by, they would not have known what we were at. It was reported we got above thirty Pounds from Mr. *Hancock*, but I do assure the World we got no more than one Guinea and a half in Gold, and about six Shillings and Six-pence in Silver, his Gold Watch, and a great Quantity of his Lady's wearing Apparel and Child's Linnen.

After this Robbery, we went directly back to *St— G—'s* ; but they were all in Bed, except *M—y G—*, whom I called down, and she let us in and made a Fire, and got us a Tankard of Toddy, and then called up her Husband, who came down directly, and we told him and his Wife what we had done ; and *Iurk* fetched in all the Things we had robbed Dr. *Hancock* of, in order to shew them, and Mr. *G—* took the Gold Watch in his Hand : I then asked *M—y G—* to lend me a Wallet (which she did)

to pack up the Things in, and she folded up the Gowns as well as she could ; for she said it would spoil them to rumple them ; and she assisted us in putting them into the Wallet : I then ask'd Mr. G—— if he had any Gunpowder to load our Pistols with, who took down a Fowling Piece that lay on the Rack in his Kitchen, drew the Charge and gave me the Gunpowder ; when I ask'd M—— G—— for a Spoon and a Pipe to make two Brace of Balls to load our Pistols with, which she gave me, and they both assisted me in making them, and in loading our Pistols : *Burk* ask'd M—— G—— if she was not afraid to see us load our Pistols ; she said, *No ; they are not the first I have seen loaded by Night in this Kitchen :* She then hash'd us some Veal. I bought a Bay Gelding of S—— n G—— for six Pounds, and then we drank four or five Tankards of Toddy, and paid our Reckoning ; and M—— G—— said, *I would have you get as far as you can by Day-light, and send to us, and we will send you Word what News there is at Bath.*

We set out again for *Clarken Down*, and so by the *Glass-House*, where *Burk* stole a Bay Gelding with a Pack Saddle. We went that Morning to *Wells* before we baited, and at Night to *Taunton*, and the next Day to *Exeter*. *Burk*, as soon as he put up his Horse, went to one W—— C——'s, a H——, in *Northgate-street*, and told him what we had done, and gave him his Pistols to lock up for him, and said *Baxter will come and bring his to you by and by :* he said, *and welcome.* Just after, I went to C——'s Shop, but *Burk* was not there ; when C—— told me what *Burk* had told him, and said, *I have lock'd up his Pistols ; shall I lock up your's ?* I said, *No ; I will not put mine out of my Pockets :* Then I told him I had been on the Scamp and what I had robb'd the Chaise of ; I show'd him the Gold Watch, and told him what rich Cloaths we had got to sell : He wanted me to change Watches with him, the Gold one for a Silver one, which he said was got the same Way up at the Start, that is at *London*, and sent him down as a Present by a Family Man, but that it was christen'd before it came, that is, the Name and Number taken out, and others put in. He told me if I would bring a Gown to his House, he had a Sister-in-Law who sold old Cloaths, she should buy it of me, and would say they were his Wife's : Accordingly he went with me to the Inn, and I show'd him the Gown ; and I gave him some of the Child's Caps and a Gown, and some other Things, which he carried to his House and kept for me, he well knowing the same to be stolen, and from whence, and that they were got on the Highway. The said C——, *Brown*, and I, were never apart last *Lammas Assizes* at *Exon* ; for *Brown* knew him for twelve Years last past in *London*, and they had been out together on the Sneak : He is an old Family Man

Man and left *London* on that Occasion, and came into the Country.

The 24th and 26th of *March*, one ——— and his Wife came to me, and bought a Shirt and a great Coat of Dr. *Hancock's* Servant's, which we stole from the Chaise: I told him he must take off the Buttons and Lining, which he did accordingly; and when it was ask'd for, he denied it; but afterwards it was found in his Custody. One of the above two Days, he and his Wife came to the Gaol of *Exon*, and fetcht out a Fly Petticoat and Sack; and she put them under her Petticoats, and said, *No-body will mind what I carry out of Prison, because I am always bringing Things in and out here, and at any Time we will give you as much as any Body shall for any Thing that lies in our Way*: They both well knew those Things to be stolen.

At the same Time one ——— and his Wife came to the said Prison; and he told me he would serve me or Mrs. *Baxter* at any Time, and secrete any Thing for me or her: Accordingly Mrs. *Baxter* gave them a great Quantity of wearing Apparel, which he and she told me they had sent to *Launceston*; and I was forced to hire a Horse for him, which cost me five Shillings, and two Shillings and Six-pence for his Trouble to fetch the said Things back again, they having sent away those Things unknown to me or Mrs. *Baxter*, at the same Time both knowing them to be stolen, for I told them they were. And if it were not for such People as those I have mentioned in this Treatise, *Sharping* and *Thieving* would be but a miserable Calling; and, in short, if the World will allow me to be a Judge of the Matter, I think it but a dismal Profession at best; for I can speak it by experimental Knowledge, that a Man that follows this Way of Living, can never be at Rest Night nor Day: Such has been my unhappy Condition a great while; for as the wise Man saith, *A wounded Conscience who can bear?*

I forgot to mention that in Sept. 1752, I and *John Brown*, alias *Dawson*, *William Elger*, *John Allen*, alias *Robert Jones*, alias *Robert Graham*, went to *Waybill* Fair, where we met *Thomas B——s*, and *A——m G——g*, of *Sh——on*; and we agreed among us to buy two or three hundred Sheep of one Mr. *Medlicott*, of *Sheston*, a Neighbour of *B——s* and *G——g's*, and never pay for them; but I coming late to the Fair, the Sheep were all sold, and we then agreed to meet at *Appleshaw* Fair, on the same Purpose. We four then went on the *Sharping* Lay, and *Allen* pick'd up a young Countryman, that came out of *Sussex* to buy Sheep, and his Shepherd with him; we defrauded him of fourteen Guineas and his Watch, and drank plentifully of Wine while we were at Work, and when his Money was gone took him out at one Door of the Booth, while the Sailor went out at the other; but the Countryman soon returned

returned again, and finding we were gone, the Reckoning paid, and half a Bottle of Wine left upon the Table, then discovered, tho' too late, that he was bit ; he bore it with Patience, and he and his Man sat down and drank the Remainder of the Bottle of Wine before they departed.

The next Day we went to a Booth that was *Flash*, (we always have two or three Booths or Houses in every Fair *Flash*, as we generally spend a great deal of Money every Fair Day.) I picked up an old Man that sold Cheese, by dropping of a Shilling, and took him into the same Booth to spend the Shilling, where the Sailor and Capper was ; the Sailor ask'd the old Man to change a Guinea, and finding he had not much Money, laid him a Guinea that neither he nor I could borrow fifteen Guineas in half an Hour : I went the old Man's Halves ; but the Sailor said he must not bring any Person with him, but must come by himself : Accordingly he and I went together, and borrow'd the Money of the old Man's Son, and came back and won the Guinea. The old Man was so rejoiced at his good Luck, that expecting to win all the Sailor's Money, he made a Stake for the whole, and lost it at the first Prick. We both went to borrow more ; but when we came back the Sailor and his Companion were gone, as the Landlord told us, so we parted. We then went to our first Booth, where I staid within, and my Companions that were out at Work, brought in the Master of a Sloop, belonging to *Portsmouth*, by finding Half a Crown ; we laid him the same Wager, that he did not borrow twenty Guineas in half an Hour ; the Sailor had upwards of one hundred Guineas in his Pocket ; the Captain went out and borrowed twenty-two Guineas, and made Stakes for the whole, and lost ; he cried and stamped very much, but the Landlord came and turned him and us out of his Booth, and said we were all a Parcel of Rogues, that we all came in together, and should all go out together ; so we all went out together at one Door, but returned again at the other Door, and staid and drank very plentifully : We carried forty-five Pounds out of the Fair.

The Beginning of *November*, we, the same four, went to *Apple-shaw* Fair, to meet B——s and G——g ; accordingly we all met together, and agreed what to do with *Medlicott* : B——s and G——g show'd me *Medlicott's* Penns, and I bought one hundred and eleven Sheep of him, and desired him to come down to the *Iron-Pear-Tree*, where I would pay him for the Sheep : He asked me what Country I belonged to ; B——s and G——g had told me before to say *Brackley*, in *Northamptonshire*, which I did : B——s, G——g, and my Accomplices, were at the *Iron-Pear-Tree*, waiting for us, and we going into the same Room, I——s said, *How do you do, Mr. Poulter ?* I answered, *At your Service : What,*

says B——s and G——g, here is our old Neighbour Medlicott; Have you bought all, Mr. Poulter? I said, Yes, Mr. G——g; but I am indebted to you fifteen Guineas: On which I pull'd out my Purse, paid him the Money, and thanked him: He said, You are welcome to all the Sheep I have at any Time; I am sorry you did not deal with me now, but I am glad you have dealt with our Neighbour. I then went out, to give them an Opportunity of talking: Medlicott ask'd them where I lived; they told him at Brackley, that they had dealt with me for many hundred Pounds, and that my Note was worth a thousand Pounds. When I came in, one of my Accomplices came and asked if Mr. Poulter of Brackley was there; I said, Yes: He said, If you are the Gentleman, I have a Draft on you for sixty Pounds: I said, Very well; you must meet me at Night, and I will answer it: He said, Very well, and went his Way. I said to Medlicott, What doth the Sheep come to? He replied, Sixty Pounds, and upwards: I said, I will pay you at Andover Fair: He said, You must let me have some Cash, for I have a great Sum to pay away: I said, How much will do? He replied, Twenty Pounds: I then said, Mr. G——g, can you lend me so much? He answered, Yes, five Times as much, if you want it: I said, No; but twenty. He lent it to me, and I gave him my Note for the Money; but he had fifteen Guineas of my Money before, when I ow'd him not a Farthing, nor never had any Dealings with him nor B——s, only under a Colour to blind Medlicott. I paid Medlicott twenty Pounds, and gave him my Note for forty more, to be paid at Andover Fair: Accordingly, we let run the Sheep, and as B——s and G——g claimed as great a Right to them as we, we paid them two Parts out of six. We drove the Sheep to Penzon, about a Mile from Wey-Hill, to one Mr. L——s; and B——s sent a Man with twenty Pounds for forty Pounds worth of Sheep, which we let them have, so that they two had as much as we four: But they said they would make it up in the next; and then they sent to me, and said Medlicott was to be had again, if I would write him a Letter for three or four Score more, to meet me at Luggershall; and at the same Time write a Letter to G——g, and desire him to carry the Letter to Medlicott, and shew him his at the same Time: I did as he desired, and G——g went with the said Letter to Mr. Medlicott. G——g ask'd Mr. Medlicott if he would send me the Sheep; he said, I can't tell. G——g said, I will give you Six-pence a Head for the sixty Ewes, and send them to Mr. Poulter myself; but Mr. Medlicott refused, and said, I will send them to Mr. Poulter, for they are fit to turn into any Gentleman's Park: G——g said, I shall send him sixty, if you are willing: But all this was done to deceive Mr. Medlicott, they both having Sheep to come that Way to Andover Fair, where all the Money was

to be paid for the Sheep: Accordingly I sent *John Allen* to meet the Sheep. *Mr. Medicott* was to bring to *Engelsbait*: *Allen* passed for my Man, and said I was gone into *Dorsetshire* for more; accordingly he met *Mr. Medicott* with the Sheep: He had a Note from me to *Mr. Medicott*; who delivered the Sheep, on Sight of the Note, to my Man *Allen*, and sent me back a Note of the Delivery of the same, according to my Order. *Allen* drove the Sheep to me, where I was waiting on Purpose, about a Mile from *Wey Hill*: We staid there till *B—s* and *G—g* came to us, and we sold them the Sheep that came to thirty-nine Pounds for twenty; for they said I should not have had them, had it not been for them, and they ought to have Half; so they got seventynine Pounds worth of Sheep for forty Pounds: And at that Time they said, *Damn Medicott, we have not done with him yet, if you are willing, for he gets Money faster than we do: If you are willing Poulter, you shall rob him one Night or other; when he has got a Sum of Money about him, we will slay him at a Fair or Market late, and we will come with him, so you must rob him and us too, and we will fill our Purses full of Halfpence on Purpose, and say we have lost forty or fifty Pounds: He keeps his Money in his Boots; for the other Night he was drunk, and I undressed him, and pulling off his Boots I found upwards of forty Pounds: This is the Way we may ruin him, if you are willing: But I would not agree to these Proposals at that Time; if I had I believe it would have ruined him.*

I think such People as these are worse than myself or my Accomplices: This is called in the Cant, *Mafoning*; that is, giving your Notes for Money, and never designing to pay it: This Defraud was carried on by two of *Mr. Medicott's* near Neighbours; and, as they pretended themselves, his particular Friends, of the same Calling, Sheep Jobbers: *T— B—* lives at the *S—h's* Shop in the Gloucester Road, between *F—e* and *F—r*: *A— G—g* lives at *S—n* in *W—e*, within three Miles of his Grace the Duke of *Beauford's* at *Badminton*.

I do not think there is one out of ten of those People called Horse Jockeys, but will buy stolen Horses of any Family Man, though at the same Time they know them to be stolen; and they will capp to any mafoning Cull for any Horse or Beast of any Sort, and buy them afterwards.

The Way that Convicts return from Transportation, and
the only Way how to prevent their Return.

AFTER they are in any Part of North *America*, the general Way is this, just before they go on Board a Ship, their Friend or Accomplice purchase them their Freedom from the Merchant or Captain that belongs to the said Ship, for about ten Pound Sterling, some gives more and some less; then the Friend of the Convict or Convicts, get a Note from the Merchant, or Captain, that the Person is free to go unmolested when the Ships arrive between the Capes of *Virginia*, where they please. But I never heard of any Convict that came home again in the same Ship they went over in; for the Merchant, or Captain gives a Bond to the Sheriff of the County where such Convicts go from, to leave them in *America*, and they get a Receipt from the Custom there; but as there is Ships coming home every Week, if they can pay their Passage they are refused in no Ship. Some Men will work their Passage back again, and them that cannot free themselves take an Opportunity of running away from their Master, and lay in the Woods by Day, and travel by Night for *Philadelphia*, *New York*, or *Boston*, in which Places no Questions are asked them. This encourages a great many to commit Robberies more than they would, because they say they do not mind Transportation, it being but four or five Months Pleasure, for they can get their Freedom and come home again. I knew one that never went over, but bribed some of the Ship's Crew lying in the Transport Hole, *Bristol*. Her Name was *Elizabeth Connor*, I think it was in 1748, she was convicted at the said City for picking Pockets, and was ordered for Transportation, but is now in *England*, which I gave an Account of to *Stokes*, an Attorney at Law in *Bristol*.

To prevent any Convict coming back before their limited Time is out, is for the Government to lay a Charge or Fine on such Merchant or Captain not to free them before hand, and for the Colonies in *America* to do as they do in the Islands in the *West Indies*, that no Person or Persons can go on board any homeward bound Ship, without publishing his or her Name on the publick Crosses such a Number of Days before; and for such Person or Persons to bring a Certificate from the Governor, with Proof that he or she is not indented, nor a Convict, that would prevent such a Number of Convicts coming back again before their Time is expired.

A full Discovery of Thieving and Defrauding in all Shapes.

F I R S T.

To caution all Shopkeepers and Salesmen against Shoplifters of both Sexes, and the best Way to prevent their Villainies is as follows :

TH E R E shall be generally three Persons together, called in *Cant*, *Prigers*, *Lifts*, or *Files*. They shall go by a Shop or Standing, to see if there are any Goods down on the Counter ; if not, one of them shall go to the Shop or Standing, and call for Goods of different Sorts to be showed him or her, and then comes in the other two, who take no Notice of the other that went in before ; he or she buying Something, the Counter being covered with Goods, one of the two shall look over the Goods, while the other shall plant a Piece under the rest, not opened, altho' one or more Persons be behind the Counter at the same Time, who shall not see them by Reason they will open a Piece of Stuff and hold it up between the Owner and their Partner that sits down with her Petticoats half up, ready for the Word *nap* it ; then she puts it between her Carriers (that is a *Cant* Word for Thighs) and then gets up and lets her Cloaths drop, agreeing and paying for what they like, and so walks off, and can walk very well without putting their Hands to hold it ; then going into a Yard or Entry, their Partner takes it from them : Some in the same Manner secretes Goods under their Cloaks, and if small Pieces, in their under Petticoats, half tucked up : If it be a Box of Ribbons, they will *pame* a Piece or two in one Hand, while the Shop keeper measures a Yard or two on the Counter ; they have a Handkerchief on Purpose, when taking it up to wipe their Nose, they put it with the Ribbons into their Pockets ; but you must observe if they do not prig any Goods, they will not buy any ; but to prevent them you must observe at Fairs and Markets, that these Sort of People call for a great many Sorts of Goods, till the Counter is full, on Purpose, they seeming difficult to be pleased. All Shop-keepers, to prevent this, should put by one Sort of Goods, before they take down another.

Files, Pitter Lays, or Leather Lays.

IN a Fair or Market, where there is a Throng of People, we say *Come Culls, shall us pike to the Push or Gaff, a rum Vile for the File or Lift to Pitter-lay or Leather lay; come, let us pike, we shall napp a rum Bit; that is, Come Men, shall us go to the Throng or Fair, a good Town for the Pick-pockets or Shop lifters, to steal Portmanteaus or Leather-bags; come, let us go, we shall take a good Bit.* Then three or four Persons go to the Fair or Market, and put up at the first Ken (or Hoofe) they come to in the Vile, (or Town) in order to be out of the Push (or Throng) as soon as we have napp'd (or taken) a Bit; then we pike to glee if there is a Cull that has a Bit; if so, the Files go before the Cull and try his Cly, and if they feel a Bit, cry gammon; then two or three of us hold him up, whilst some Prads or Rattlers come by: If they napp the Bit, they cry pike; then we go and fisk the Bit, and ding the empty Bit, for fear it should be found, and fisk the Blunt, and gee if none is quare; to prevent a Rapp, it is a Bit of Rige or Wage: Come, let us pike to glee for a Pitter or Leather: there is a Cull that has a rum Loag, gammon: Then we jostle him up, and one knocks his Kelp off, and while he lifts his Hand up, his Loag is napp'd and after the Gaff it is christened and fenced.

To prevent Men's or Women's Pockets being picked, they must not carry their Money in a Purse or Handkerchief, but keep it loose in their Pockets: If Women carry their Money loose, or in a Purse they are liable to lose it; therefore I advise them to carry their Money in their Bosom, and no Pickpocket will attempt to take it.

*To shew how People are defrauded in Fairs and Markets
different Ways as follows:*

First, is the great Trade or knowing Art called *Filing*, that is, picking Pockets.

Second, is the *Lift or Buckteen*, that is, Shoplifting.

Third, is the deceiving Art called the *Old Nobb*, that is, pricking in the Belt.

Fourth, is the Dealers called *Masons*, that is, giving your Notes for Money, and never to pay it.

Fifth, is the *Duders*, that is, Sellers of Handkerchiefs.

Sixth, is the *Gibbers*, Horse Dealers.

Seventh, is the *Turners and Pinchers*, that is those getting Change for Money, and putting back Part and keeping some.

Eighth, is the ringing *Tuggs and Seats*, that is, changing Great Coats and Saddles.

The

The Art of OLD NOBB, call'd pricking in the Belt.

THERE is generally four Persons concerned, that is the Sailor, call'd a *Legg Cull*, to pinch the *Nobb*; the next is the *Capper* who always keeps with the Sailor: and two *Pickers up*, or *Money Droppers*, to bring in *Flats*. The first Thing they do at a *Gaff*, is to look for a Room clear of Company, which the Sailor and *Capper* immediately take, while the *Money Droppers* go out to look for a Flat; if they see a Countryman they like, one drops a Shilling, or Half a Crown just before him, and picking it up again, looks the Man in the Face, and says, I have found a Piece of Money, did you not see me pick it up; the Man says, Yes: The *Sharper* says, if you had found it, I would have had half, so I will do by you as I would be done unto, and says, come and drink; then taking him into the Room where the other two is, cries, By your Leave Gentlemen, I hope we don't disturb you: No, cries the Sailor, no Brothers: Will you drink any Brandy, for I don't like weak Liquor; then the Sailor asks the *Capper* how far it is to *London*, who says, I don't know, perhaps those Gentlemen can tell you, and then directs his Discourse to the Flat; perhaps they will answer a hundred Miles; the Sailor cries I can ride that in a Day, and sometimes says in four or five Hours; for says he my Horse will run twenty Knots an Hour for twenty-four Hours together: *Capper* says, I believe Farmer you have not got such a Horse as this Sailor has; if the Farmer laughs, and cries no, then the Sailor says, I must go and get Half a Pint of Brandy, for I am grip'd, and so leaves them: The *Capper* says, Gentlemen, it is an old Saying and a true one, *Sailors get their Money like Horses and spend it like Asses*; and adds, I never saw him till now buying a Horse of my Man; he tells me he has been at Sea, and has got about four hundred Pounds, Prize Money, but I believe he will squander it all away, for he was gaming just now with two Boys, and lost forty Shillings at a strange Game of pricking in a String: Did either of you ever see it, Gentlemen, cries the *Capper*; if you two are willing, I will ask him to show it us, for we may as well win some of his Money as any Body else: The Flat and the Dropper cries, Do; then comes the Sailor, staring as if drunk, and cries, What Cheer, Brothers? I've just seen a pretty Girl in the Fair, and went in to drink with her, and made a Bargain with her, and gave her a six and thirty Shilling Piece, but an old Woman came and call'd her away, when she went out and told me she would come to me presently; then the *Capper* laughs, and says, Have you got your Money of her again? The Sailor says, No; but she will come to me; then they all laugh. This is done to deceive the

the Flat: Then saith the Capper, What have you done with the Stick and the String, Sailor? He answers, What, that which I bought of the Boys; it is in my Pocket, but I will not sell it to any of you, and then he pulls out the *Old Nobb*, and saith, What do you think I gave for it? I gave but Six-pence, and as much Brandy as the two Boys could drink: Capper cries, It is but a Piece of Leather; It is made out of a Monkey's Hide, as the Boys told me, says the Sailor; and they told me there is a Game to be played at it, which no Body can do twice together; I will go down on board Ship, and play with my Captain, and I do not fear but I will win his Ship and Cargo: Then they all laugh, and the Sailor makes up the *Old Nobb*, and the Capper lays a Shilling, and pricks himself and wins; the Sailor cries, You are a Dab, I will not lay you any more, but if you will call any Stranger, I will lay again; Why if you think me a Dab, as you call it, I will get this strange Gentleman, or this, (pointing to the Flat) Done, cries the Sailor, but you shall not tell him; then he makes up the *Nobb*, and Capper lays a Shilling, Flat Pricks, and says to him, you shall go Six-pence if you will; they win, and Capper says to the Flat can you lend me Half a Crown? on Purpose to find the Depth of his Pocket; and if they see a good deal of Gold, he must win three or four Times if no Gold but twice, and so go and pick up others. Sometimes the Flat has no Money, the Sailor cries, I have more Money than any Man in the Fair, and pulls out his Purse full of Gold, and says not one of you can borrow twenty or thirty Pounds in half an Hour's Time for a Guinea: Capper cries, I have laid out all mine; Farmer, Can you, I'll go your Halves, if you think you can do it: The Sailor saith, you must not bring any Body with you; then the Dropper goes with the Flat, and says, You must not tell your Friend it is for a Wager; if you do he will not lend it you. Flat goes and borrows it, and brings it to the Sailor, shows it him and wins the Wager; then the Sailor pitcheth the *Nobb* again, and the Capper whispers to the Flat to prick out this Time saying, it will make the Sailor the more eager to lay; we may as well win his Money as not, for he will spend it else upon Whores: Flat loses on Purpose; then the Sailor swears, pulls out his Money, throws it about the Room, and cries, No Man can win for ever, and then lays a Guinea, but will not let him prick, but throws down five Guineas; and the Capper urging the Flat and going his Halves, the Sailor saith, My Cabbin Boy will lay as much as that, I'll lay no less than twenty Guineas; the Capper cries, Lay Farmer, and take up the forty: The Money being down, the Capper cries, Is the *Nobb* flang'd, Sailor? who says, It is flown, which signifies one End is dropt, that puts out the Flat. When he has lost, the Dropper cries, Come near, and the

Sailor

Sailor cries, Missel the Gloke ; then the Dropper takes him by the Arm and has him out of Doors ; and the Reckoning being paid the Capper and Sailor follow after, and run another Way : When they are out of Sight, the Dropper saith to the Flat, Go you back and play with the Sailor for a Shilling, whilst I go and borrow some Money ; but when the Flat goes to the House, he finds them gone, and then he knows he is bit, but not till he has dearly paid for it.

The deceiving Art called MASONING.

MASONERS are a Sett of People that give Paper for Goods ; there is generally three or four of them that go to a Fair or Market together, where one appears like a Farmer or Grazier, and the other two as Vouchers : One is to look out for a Farmer that has any Kind of Beast to sell ; and if he thinks he is a likely Fellow to be taken in, the other Person is to ask the Price of the said Cattle, where they come from, what Market Towns the Farmer keeps, and the Houses and People's Names in such Towns ; when he finds out these, he goes and tells the *Masoner* the Story : The Farmer is then brought into the House, where the *Masoner* is sitting paying Money for Cattle, as the Farmer thinks ; and the *Masoner's* Man tells him what Money he has offered the Farmer, and they begin to talk about the lowest Price : The *Masoner* then goes out, that they may have an Opportunity of telling the Farmer what a topping Dealer he is, and where he lives, (but it must be in some Country Place,) and that his Note is worth five hundred Pounds : The *Masoner* soon returns, and says, I can't find the Gentleman I have a Draft upon, and don't know what to do for Money to pay for the Goods I have bought To-day ; I must order them to meet me at such a Place, and the Persons Name where he knows the Farmer uses : The Farmer hearing this, says, I know them very well ; the *Masoner* then asks him whether he comes that Way, and the Farmer telling him he does, he says, That's right then ; tell me the lowest Price of your Cattle ; I cannot pay you now, but I will pay you the next Market Day, at the Place as before-mentioned ; I suppose that will not be any Difference to you, Farmer : No, answers the Person that brought him in, your Note is worth a thousand Pounds ; you will give your Promissory Note for the Money, and any Dealer in the Fair will take it, paying a small Discount, for it's as good as the Bank of *England*. This generally makes the Agreement, the Note is taken, and the Cattle is drove away, and sold directly to another Dealer, Toll-free. There are Dealers waiting on Purpose to buy such Goods ; for they buy them cheap, because they know them to cost no Money, but Paper. The

poor Farmer goes to the Place appointed, thinking to receive his Money, but to his Grief finds himself bit.

D U D D E R S.

THEY are a Sett of People that resort to Fairs and Markets, under Pretence of being Smugglers, and selling nothing but prohibited Goods ; at the same Time it is ordinary Goods made in England. They walk about the Fair till they see a Person fit for their Purpose, whom they tell that they can sell very cheap, and take him into a House or Booth to show their Goods, and desire him to make Haste, for Fear of the Exciseman ; for if he should come they should lose all their Goods : The Ignorant is by these Means deceived, and generally gives double the Value for the Goods he buys. At other Times they will go to a Farm House, and tell the Farmer that they have got a Horse or two loaded with rich Goods of all Sorts ; if he will secrete them, they'll make him a handsome Present, and then they shew him a Sort of the Goods, such as embroidered Handkerchiefs, Aprons, and Ruffles : Perhaps these Things will cost them forty Shillings, and look worth ten or twelve Pounds ; and they will want to borrow three Times their Value on them, under Pretence that their Goods are left at another Place for a small Sum, and never fetch them again ; neither have they any more Goods than what they have with them. They will sometimes pretend to leave a Bag of Tea, which generally proves to be a Bag of Saw Dust, with a little Tea at the Top, just at the Mouth of the Bag. This is called a *Dumb Lock*.

G I B B E R S.

HORSE Dealers. There is generally three of them together at a Fair ; their Method is to buy Horses that are *buck'd*, * or that have the *Sniches*, *Pipers*, or *Grogs*, on Purpose to deceive ignorant People in changing them. One shall lead a Horse about, and another shall look out for a *Mouth* † that has a Horse to sell or change ; then the other Person shall go and ask the Price of the *Gibber's* Horse, and he asks treble the Value of it before the *Mouth's* Face, and the Bearer up shall bid within a Crown of the Money that the *Gibber* asks, on Purpose to make the *Mouth* believe that the Horse is worth the Money : The *Mouth*, upon this, is eager to change, sometimes giving and sometimes taking Money into the Bargain,

* A Horse *buck'd*, is almost blind ; *Sniches* is glander'd ; *Pipers* is broken winded ; *grog'd* is founder'd ; *jack'd* is spaven'd.

† An ignorant Person.

Bargain, when at the same Time the *Mouth's* Horse is worth three or four of the *Gibber's*; they sometimes take in several in a Day in this Manner.

T U R N E R S and P I N C H E R S.

TWO of them goes together, one of whom gets as many Half Crowns as he can, and goes into a House or Booth, and calls for Liquor, and then asks the Landlord or Landlady for Change of Half a Crown, who generally pulls out a Handful of Silver to give them two Shillings and Sixpence, and the other Person says you need not change; then he secretes a Shilling between his Finger and Thumb, and turns his Hand upside down over his or her's, and by that Means will get several Shillings in a Day. If a Person pulls out a Handful of Silver to give them Change for Half a Crown, they will ask for a *Queen Anne's* Six pence to put in a Letter; the Person being ignorant of their Intent, lets them look in their Hand or Purse; and if there is Gold in the same, they are sure to lose it, by his pinching it between the Thumb and middle Finger; they then thank them and go their Way, the People not knowing they have lost any Thing. I therefore caution People not to give Change in that Manner.

Ringin' T U G G S and S E A T S.

PEOPLE in Fairs or Markets in the Summer, are apt to give their Great Coats to the Maſd, and put their Names on it with a Piece of Paper; the Servant cannot remember every Coat, and the Sharper comes in and writes his Name on his Coat that is worth but little, and changes his Note to another Coat; he then goes out, and comes in presently and calls for the Coat with such a Note on it, and the Servant delivers it without Dispute, and they send another to fetch their old Coat: They often get six or seven Coats in a Day with that old one. To prevent this, the Landlord or Servant ought to write two Notes, both in one Hand, and to deliver one to the Owner, and pin the other on the Coat; and if the Person that comes for the Coat cannot produce the Note as above, let him not have the Coat without good Proof, and that will prevent many Disorders.

Changing of Saddles is done by the same Sort of People; their Horse having a Rug or Horse Cloth on it for that Purpose, they watch an Opportunity of taking off their own Saddle, and changing it for a good one, putting it on their own Horse, and tying the Cloth over it with a Sarfagal, and then take their Horse away and puts him to another Inn.

MILLING of KENS.

HOUSE-Breaking is always done in the Night : The Persons concerned take a View of the House or Shop the Day before, to see what is to be taken, and where to make an Entrance ; it is generally done at Midnight, and if there is any Scouts, that is, Watchmen, one of the Gang takes him away, under Pretence to light him Home, or show him some distant House, and in the mean Time the Work goes on. If they get Entrance, they have a dark Lanthorn, and fall to rifling the House, for which Purpose they carry Sacks, and always know where to sell the Goods before they take them ; the World may be sure if there were no Receivers there would be no Thieves, for they are the whole Encouragers of Vice. To prevent such Robberies I beg Leave to acquaint all Shopkeepers, and House-keepers, to put the fore Lock of the Bolt fast with a good Spring, and to have good inside Bolts to their Doors, or a Chain across them, and a small Bell to their Doors and Windows, and to keep a little Dog that will bark ; you may be assured if such Things as these be done, of not being robb'd, because if a Dog barks, or Bell rings, they will not attempt any further.

The Morning S N E A K.

ON this Lay there is two goes together, one wears an Apron, and the other a great Coat, they go in a Morning just as the Maids open the Doors and Windows, and glee into them, that is, look into them, to see if there's any *Wage* of any Sort, that is Silver, that may be left in any of the Rooms last *Darkey*, that is the last Night ; they wait an Opportunity till the Maid goes to make the *Tinny*, that is, the Fire, then they go in and fisk all the Rooms for Silver or Tuggs, that is Cloaths, or any Thing that lies in the Way, and puts it in his Apron ; and if they find a Buffet they take all, and pike directly into the first Rattler, that is into the first Coach, and so to their Fence or Lock, and naps the Blunt ; that is, to the Receiver, and takes the Money for it.

House-keepers ought to take Care of their Plate before they go to Bed, then they will be sure not to lose it, and to keep all their lower Rooms lock'd.

The Night S N E A K.

TH A T is, three or more Persons go together at Dark, searching of Gentlemen's Houses, and try the Glass, if it will jump ; that is, the Windows, if they will lift up, or if the Seger is dubb'd, that is, the Door lock'd or bolted, and if they can get

get in Doors, they pike up the Prancers, that is go up Stairs, and fisk the Lumbers, that is search the Rooms whilst the People are at Supper in the next Room, two or three standing at the Door for Fear of a Grab, that is, for Fear of being taken; and if so, the others will rescue him.

To prevent this, House-keepers ought to have Spring Locks to their Doors, and no Latch; and if their Windows are fast'd, to have at the lower End of the said Window a Spring Ketcher, that will snap into the Frame, and so on the second Floor Windows, which are often got into by the Help of a Jacob, that is, a Ladder,

I have known a Sneaksmen, in a Morning, fetch down Stairs a Bed tied up in a Blanket, and meet the Master at the Door; who said, What have you got there? One of your Beds, Sir, replied the other, that Madam has sent to the Upholsterer.

Kide-Lye, that is done in Cities and great Towns.

AT Night two or three Sharpers go together from one End of the Town to the other, to meet with some Prey; one goes on one Side of the Street, the other on the other; and if they meet a Man or Maid Servant with a Portmanteau, Box, or Bundle, they follow them until they rest it; then one of them goes to him or her, and says, I will give you a Shilling to carry this Letter to that House, because I do not care to go myself, but don't stay; and in the mean Time they pike with the Booty: But if they do not rest on the Way, one of the Sharpers will go up to them, and ask them where they are going, which ignorant People will tell, and which the Sharper makes a Memorandum of as he walks, and then goes and tells his Partner of the same; accordingly he goes forward to the said House, being well dress'd, as they always are; and one says to the other, Nap my Kelp whilst I stall at the Jegger to nap the Slangs from the Cull or Moll; that is, Take my Hat whilst I stop at the Door to take the Things from the Man or Woman; and just before he or she comes to the Door, the Sharper comes out at the Door, if opened; if not, he comes from the Door without a Hat, and cries, What made you stay so long? and so takes the Things of him or her, and bids the Person go over the Way to that House or Tavern, for some Beer or a Bottle of Wine, and says, bring Change for a Guinea, or else I cannot pay you: Whilst the Person is gone over, the Things are brush'd, that is, gone, to the great Surprize of the Bearer thereof. If they light of a Country Man or Woman with a Bundle, asking the Way, they will go along with them, pretending to show them, and carry their Bundle or Box for them; and whilst one takes the Person forward, the other gives them the Drop down some Yard or Alley, they know-

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ing where to meet again with the Booty : In the mean while the poor ignorant Man or Woman is almost bereaved of Senses.

The P E T T E R L A Y S.

TH E S E Persons go three or four Miles out of Town to meet the Rattlers, that is, Coaches, to see if there is not a Petter behind, that is, a Portmanteau, or Box ; if so, they will at a proper Place cut it off ; and if it is in the Boot, they will follow the Coach to the Inn or House : One is dressed like a Porter, and comes to help to unload the Coach, whilst the other stands a little Way off, to help away with it. It is generally dark in the Winter by Six o'Clock, and that is the only Time for this Business : They are the same Sharpers at this Lay, as at the others.

The bold Adventure called the S C A M P.

HI G H W A Y M E N are generally Persons that have been educated in Gaming, and have lived well, and kept lewd Women Company ; and they live to that Degree, that they cannot support their own Extravagancies, and Fortune at Gaming running cross against them, they think on this last Shift, and take to the Road ; and after a short Time, if successful in Business, they dress out for Gentlemen, and get acquainted with the flaving Glocks of the Inns on the Panney, that is, the Ostlers on the Road, and some Landlords, to give them Intelligence ; which they very commonly do, by hearing Gentlemen talk that put up at their Inns. Gentlemen Travellers are very apt to call for the Landlord to sup with them ; and then, after Supper, asking what News concerning the Roadsmen, and perhaps telling him what Money they have, and where they put it and their Notes, and the Road they are going, and where they lie the next Night, and so on ; and if they do not tell the Ostler, he will have the Assurance to ask them : And when Mr. Scamp comes, he calls for a Bottle or Bowl directly, before he asks what News ; then, if Time permits, the Landlord repeats it over and over ; whereby he hears all the News of the Day, and which Way is best to go for Prey, and always leaves something handsome for the Servants.

For these Reasons many Gentlemen are pursued on the Road, but some are met with by Chance. Highwaymen generally cross you before they salute ; but I advise all Gentlemen Travellers not to divulge what Substance they have with them to any Landlord, or the Ostlers, especially within forty Miles of London ; for if they do, they very often trust an Accomplice of the Scamps, and who very often turn out themselves against Quarter Day, or Christmas especially,

especially, or they could not live at the Rate they do, and hold their Heads so high. I and my Accomplices have help'd to support a great many of them ; and about *London* especially, they are half maintained by Scamps, Prigs, and Files : But (not to condemn every one, GOD forbid) there are a great many Shopkeepers in *London*, who cannot pay their Bills till they have kept *Christmas* in the Country for a few Days.

P R A D P R I G G E R S.

HORSE Stealers, they go together always the Day before, to look over the Grounds for a good Prad or Prads, then at *Darky* they *buss* them out of the Ground, that is, at Night they steal the Horses, they pike thirty or forty *Straches* that *Darky*, that is go thirty or forty Miles that Night, towards the the next *Gaff* to fence them, that is to the next Fair to sell them, and when they come there they sell them to a coaping Cull, that is a Horse Jockey they know, or a Flat : First they sell the Horses one to another, and get them Book'd, with their Marks and Ages, and some fictitious Names and Places, to prevent Accidents ; and to prove that they bought them, they get a Voucher of their own Acquaintance to vouch for them, and then they are not afraid to travel with them because they can prove that they bought them. There is not one Horse Jockey out of ten but will buy a stolen Horse of any Prad Prigger that they know, if he comes but forty *Straches* off, if they know the same to be stolen ; and I think the Receiver as bad as the Thief of all Kinds, for if there were no Receivers there would be no Thieves.

S K Y - F A R M E R S.

SKY Farmers, are People that go about the Country with a false Pass, signed by the Church-wardens and Overseers of the Parish or Place that they lived in, and some Justice of Peace, but the Names are all forged : They go about forty Miles from that Place to some easy Justice, and get him to sign it, and so on to the next, until they have a great Number of Names to their Brief ; and in this Manner they extort Money, under Pretence of sustaining Loss by Fire, or the Distemper amongst the horned Cattle ; they always appear like Gentlemen Farmers, and have a Voucher with them. They may be detected by strictly examining them, and keeping them in Custody, till a Letter is sent to the Place first mentioned in their Brief.

FAWS.

(408)
FAWS & GIPSEYS.

GIPSEYS are a People that talk *Romney*, that is, a *Cant* that no Body understands but themselves; they always travel in Bodies, Men, Women, and Children, with Horses and Asses, and never lie in Beds, but in Barns or Hedges, pretending themselves to be true *Egyptians*, and deceiving ignorant People by pretending to tell their Fortunes, and are often sent for by Persons of Fashion. When they are applied to, they pretend they must consult with their Books first, and take that Opportunity to enquire into the Family, that they may be able to give an Account about what is ask'd them; and in this Manner they deceive the World. They are great *Prigers* of *Caunes* and *Bucket-chats*, that is, Sheep and Fowl; and the Way they steal Sheep is this, They go in the Night to some Ground or Sheepfold, and catch a Sheep and break its Neck, and then leave it there till the Morning; when the Shepherd or Owner comes in the Morning and skins it, then the Gipseys beg the Flesh for their Dogs, when at the same Time they intend it for their own eating. They are great *Prigers* of *Lulley*, that is, Linen, and ought to be taken up and sent Home as Vagrants.

GAGGERS.

BEGGARS: They are a very deceitful Set of People in general, that deserve a Prison more than Relief: Some of them go in a Sailor's Dress, pretending they were Galley Slaves, and that their Tongues were cut out by the *Turks*, and their Arms were burnt in the Row Gallies: To deceive the World they cut the Strings of their Tongues, and so swallow it down their Throat, that none can perceive it, and make their Arms raw by perpetual Butters; but if they were taken to the whipping Post, the Dumb would speak, and those that walk with Crutches would shift without them. These Impostors are a great Nuisance to the Country, and a Hurt to those that are real Objects of Charity.

CHANTERS, that is, Ballad Singers, will not stick to commit any Roguery that lies in their Way.

BANDEENS are Women that sell Laces Garters, and Ribbons,

TWURLERS.

A R E a Sort of People that resort to Fairs and Markets with a round Board, divided in eight Quarters, and an Iron standing in the Middle, that turns round like the Hand of a Clock, which they play with for Money, and is a great Encourager of young People

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